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2515th MEETING

Held in New York on Thursday, 16 February 1984, at 11 a.m.

President: Mr. S. Shah NAWAZ (Pakistan).

Present: The representatives of the following States: China, Egypt, France, India, Malta, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta, Zimbabwe.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2515)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The situation in the Middle East:
   Letter dated 14 February 1984 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/16339)

The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East:
Letter dated 14 February 1984 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/16339).

1. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at the 2514th meeting, I invite the representative of Lebanon to take a place at the Council table. I invite the representative of Italy to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Fakhoury (Lebanon) took a place at the Council table; and Mr. Jannuzzi (Italy) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

2. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) [*interpretation from Arabic*]: At the outset, Sir, I should like to express to you our sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of February. Your deep understanding of international affairs, your long experience and your well-known courtesy all assure us of the good conduct of the Council's work under your presidency. In addition, it also gives me, personally, and the delegation of Egypt great pleasure to see the representative of friendly Pakistan presiding over the Council.

3. The delegation of Egypt wishes also to express to your predecessor, Mr. Chamorro Mora, the representative of Nicaragua, its deep appreciation of his excellent conduct of the Council's work during his presidency in January.

4. Before turning to the matter before us today, I should like to offer Egypt's condolences to the Soviet delegation on the passing away of the Soviet leader Yuri Andropov.

5. Allow me to start by quoting part of the statement made by President Hosni Mubarak the day before yesterday—14 February—at the White House after his meeting with President Ronald Reagan. He said:

> "The situation in Lebanon today is intolerable. The escalation of violence and the bloodshed is a threat to us all. Every nation is called upon to help. The peace-keeping role of the United Nations must be expanded and reinforced. The partition of this war-torn country should be prevented at any cost. The Lebanese people have a right to live and prosper like all other nations."*

6. Egypt has always called for respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Therefore, we called and we continue to call for the withdrawal of all non-Lebanese forces from Lebanese territory, foremost among which are the Israeli forces. Egypt has always called for national reconciliation in Lebanon and will continue to do so. Therefore, we welcomed the glimmer of hope that shone when the Geneva conference for national reconciliation was held and the fighting was stopped, thus taking a positive step that augured well for the achievement of reconciliation. Hopes were once again rekindled when it was said that a security agreement between Lebanese factions was imminent. But those hopes were once again shattered. The deterioration of the situation is symbolized by the very fact that the Lebanese capital, Beirut, has once more become a divided city and that everywhere the civilian population is subjected to various kinds of bitter suffering, if they can escape the deadly dangers surrounding them at all times.

7. Today we are not addressing the Lebanese crisis with its internal tragedies and foreign external dimen-

* Quoted in English by the speaker.

sions. Therefore, the delegation of Egypt will confine itself to the French proposal, that is, the replacement of the multinational force in Beirut by United Nations forces. The immediate task before us today is for the international community represented in the Council to take the initiative, with the sense of urgency dictated by the situation, to halt bloodshed in Lebanon and achieve a cease-fire—a major step and a new necessary attempt towards creating an atmosphere conducive to the resumption of action at the political level in Lebanon.

8. Proceeding from this, Egypt supports the French proposal. It is clear that the call for the withdrawal from Beirut of the multinational force is not intended to leave a dangerous vacuum in the wake of that withdrawal, as long as we are simultaneously called upon to support the replacement of the multinational force by a United Nations force.

9. In addition to supporting the French proposal, Egypt believes that the deteriorating situation in Lebanon demands that all of us assist in facilitating the withdrawal of the multinational force and in making it possible for the Council to shoulder its responsibilities with the aim of the most rapid possible deployment of the United Nations force.

10. I wish to add that I have recently been informed by the delegation of the United Kingdom that it is about to put forward a proposal as a contribution to our joint effort. That proposal is to make use of the United Nations personnel already stationed in Beirut. I do not wish to put the cart before the horse, but I should like to confirm that we are ready to give impartial consideration to this positive British proposal, and we are willing to accept any constructive measure.

11. The worsening of the situation in Lebanon impels all of us in the Council to take action as soon as possible to put a stop to that deterioration. The delegation of Egypt is ready to contribute with all its energy to any joint effort in support of the French proposal, which we consider to be intended to create the atmosphere necessary once again to break the cycle of violence and thus to promote a political settlement, Lebanese national reconciliation, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of Lebanon.

12. Mr. MARGETSON (United Kingdom): I should like first, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. We have already, in this first half of the month, experienced the authority and skill which you bring to that task.

13. I should also like to express my thanks to the representative of Nicaragua, Mr. Chamorro Mora, who steered us with great ability and high professionalism through our tasks last month.

14. May I also join others in expressing profound sympathy with the Soviet Union in the loss of their distinguished leader, Mr. Yuri Andropov, President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union and General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

15. The first words of my statement must be ones of profound sympathy for the people of Lebanon, and particularly for the thousands of innocent people of that country who are suffering in a continuing period of fighting and tension. I speak, of course, not only for myself and my delegation, but also for my Government, who are deeply concerned at this tragic situation.

16. It is right that the Security Council should meet so that we, who are charged under the Charter with the maintenance of international peace and security, can have the opportunity to see what can be done to avert further tragedy.

17. There is an immediate need to put an end to the fighting in Lebanon, to promote the process of national reconciliation and to make possible the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanese territory. The Council repeatedly has expressed support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. That is a phrase which comes easily to the lips of us all. The difficulty is to translate it into deeds.

18. My Government believes that the United Nations has an important role to play in achieving these objectives. Indeed, we have urged for a long time, in the Council and in our diplomacy generally at the United Nations, that the United Nations should be given an enhanced role in Lebanon. The British Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher, gave her full support for such a role when she spoke to the Secretary-General in September. Over many months now we have been following this up in discussion with other delegations and with the Secretariat, exploring the possibilities of such a role.

19. So we strongly support the efforts which you, Mr. President, are making at the request of the Government of France to see if the Council can agree on a new mandate for such a role. We share the objective of getting an effective United Nations presence in and around Beirut.

20. I hope that the Council will consider carefully how best to reach agreement on this, including the eventual replacement of the multinational force, of which Britain is a member, by an enhanced United Nations presence. Much political will and flexibility will be required, not least on the part of the various parties involved in the fighting within Lebanon. But all of us know something of the national positions of the countries concerned. We know, therefore, that this process will take time.

21. Meanwhile, as we negotiate here, events in Lebanon do not stand still; the fighting continues, and with it the suffering of innocent people. We ask ourselves, therefore, "What can the United Nations do to help right now?"

22. The Secretary-General has said that the strength of the United Nations operations lies in the fact that they symbolize the will of the international community. There are United Nations observers in Beirut at this moment. There are not very many, and they are not as mobile as they would like to be. Nevertheless, to the people of Beirut they are the visible expression of the United Nations; they symbolize the peace and security which the United Nations, through the Charter, stands for. My Government would like to see the maximum possible use made of this small observer force, because we believe that it could have an important effect in reassuring the local population and in contributing to a lowering of tension.

23. With this in mind, my Government has proposed to the Secretary-General a number of limited steps which we believe that the United Nations could take now without a new Council resolution. This does not cut across in any way the major work of reaching agreement on a new mandate for an enhanced United Nations role. Nor are these steps in any way a substitute for the more far-reaching proposals which the Council must consider in due course.

24. First, we hope that the United Nations observers and other United Nations representatives already in Beirut could undertake small confidence-building measures. I shall not specify any particular ideas as I believe that the United Nations personnel themselves are in a better position to identify the particular functions they might perform, especially in the humanitarian role. It may be that to undertake such tasks a modest increase in the number of United Nations observers may be necessary. We believe that the Council should not stand in the way of such an increase if the Secretary-General considered that this would be helpful.

25. I should like in passing to say how much we admire the courage and the dedication of the United Nations observers and other United Nations representatives in Beirut in the face of considerable personal danger.

26. Secondly, we would like to suggest the active use by the Secretary-General of his good-offices role. The particular way in which the Secretary-General could use this role is, of course, for him to judge and, in the fluid situation which exists in Lebanon, he best can assess the nature and the timing of any action he would take to bring his good offices to bear with maximum effect.

27. Thirdly, we believe that further consideration should be given to the expansion of the role of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to facilitate Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

28. These steps are not ambitious ones and they may, to those who do not understand the political difficulties of the Council, appear very inadequate in the face of the present situation in Lebanon. But they are practical steps, they are humanitarian steps and they are the steps which we believe can be taken now.

29. As we all know, small steps can sometimes lead to larger ones by creating the necessary confidence in which more ambitious policies can be negotiated. We have faith in the effect of even modest measures taken in the name of the United Nations. They can provide some reassurance to the people of Lebanon that the United Nations is able and willing to play a humanitarian and politically neutral role in working for the restoration of peace and stability in their country.

30. I hope that these small measures can receive the general support which I believe they deserve.

31. Mrs. KIRKPATRICK (United States): Sir, I understand that my colleagues have already congratulated you on your accession to the office of President of the Council. I should like to express once again my personal pleasure, as well as that of my Government, at seeing that distinguished office occupied by a representative of a good friend and constructive member of the Council. I might say personally as well that I should like to congratulate the representative of Nicaragua for what I am told by many colleagues in and out of our Mission was a most skilful and expeditious conduct of the business of the Council during the previous month.

32. As we meet today, the Lebanese people are once again enduring the agony which has been too often, too consistently, their lot in the last troubled years. Today, as we meet during the agony of Lebanon, the purpose and the commitment of the United States Government remains the same as it has been during these past painful months: to support the legitimate Government and people of Lebanon in the restoration and preservation of their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity throughout the land of Lebanon to their internationally recognized borders.

33. The United States shares the view expressed by the Government of France that the international community should assume greater responsibility for assisting the people of Lebanon. We welcome all constructive contributions to this effort to bring peace —this time a peace which can perhaps endure—to Lebanon. We welcome therefore the suggestions of our colleagues from the United Kingdom as well.

34. The people of Lebanon have suffered too long the torments of violence, death, and occupation. They have endured too many months of violence, occupation and death. They have lived too long in the midst of uninvited participants in their destiny. They deserve a much better fate. They deserve more help from the international community.

35. The United States position with regard to a United Nations peace-keeping role in Lebanon is clear and consistent, although efforts are made from time to time to cast doubt on our support for a United Nations

peace-keeping role in Lebanon. We have supported a United Nations peace-keeping role in Lebanon with our votes, our diplomacy and our financial contributions. We have also actively supported a maximum role for United Nations observers in Lebanon. Repeatedly during the last year we have sought to enlarge the number and to extend the deployment of these observers in order to reinforce the fragile cease-fires which have from time to time been agreed to, only then, tragically, to be broken. We have made repeated efforts, formal and informal, alone and conjointly with others on the Security Council and in the United Nations, to enhance the role and participation of United Nations forces in the tasks of peace-keeping. We worked, for example, arduously at the time when a fragile cease-fire was achieved at the end of September 1983. We had worked in the months prior to that and we will continue our efforts to this end.

36. Parties to the complex, multi-sided Lebanese conflicts have changed. The United States Government's support for a United Nations peace-keeping role that can perform constructive tasks in an effective manner to bring peace to this country has remained constant. There should be no doubt in anyone's mind about our commitment. Today, as in the past, the United States supports authentic international peace-keeping efforts in Lebanon. We will support any reasonable proposal concerning real, effective United Nations participation in helping constructively to solve the truly tragic problems of the region. Yesterday the Secretary of State, Mr. Shultz, in Washington made this clear when he said it would be useful to state once again that a United Nations presence would be useful throughout Lebanon, particularly for such purposes as protecting Palestinian refugee camps and reinforcing cease-fires. He noted that the United Nations role presumes a return to stability, a balance of forces and some measure of political accord. All of those are, of course, goals we have all been pursuing for quite some time. Secretary Shultz's words were reinforced and reiterated by the President in his conversations with the press yesterday and will be reiterated again today—as I understand it.

37. We have noted that too often our efforts in the Council have been hampered and marred by the efforts of certain parties to gain short-range political advantage, and too often those efforts to gain short-range political advantage have taken priority over the search for peace. The efforts of some members of the Council to utilize to the fullest existing facilities and authority for United Nations participation in peace-keeping in Lebanon have been hampered by the pursuit of short-range political goals on the part of some parties.

38. The United States does not and has not pursued short-range national political goals in Lebanon. That is not the purpose of our participation in the multinational force. It never has been. We believe that the United Nations has available today actual or potential instruments in Lebanon which might be useful: a 50-man observer group, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), which could be raised —doubled, we understand—on short notice, and a nearly 6,000-man peace-keeping force, UNIFIL, in southern Lebanon, deployed in some cases in areas where violence no longer threatens the people of Lebanon.

39. The United States has consistently supported a United Nations peace-keeping role. We have been ready to consult with our colleagues on the Council on the composition and deployment of such a force. We remain ready at this time to enter into serious discussions with our colleagues on the Council and in the Secretariat concerning the composition and deployment of United Nations forces, preferably throughout Lebanon, to achieve these goals. The United States imposes no pre-conditions. We are ready to participate, when our colleagues are ready, in the achievement of these goals, which may bring, finally, relief to the suffering people of Lebanon.

40. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

41. Mr. JANNUZZI (Italy) [*interpretation from French*]: First of all, please allow me warmly to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the Italian delegation, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month and to tell you how pleased our delegation is to see the Council guided by the representative of a great country, with which Italy has such close bonds of friendship. We are convinced that the discussion that began yesterday, one we consider to be of the greatest importance, will gain from the fact that it is being presided over by you with your proven stature and experience. Please allow me also to express the gratitude of the Italian delegation for having been permitted to participate in this discussion, one that is, I repeat, of the greatest importance to us.

42. The painful consequences of the Lebanese crisis are becoming ever clearer. With increasing strength world public opinion is calling for an end to the suffering of a population already so severely tried and to the divisions and hatred that have given rise to so much mourning and is demanding the initiation of a process of national reconciliation, the sole process by which Lebanon can be saved from total disintegration, one that must also heal the wounds opened by civil war and restore conditions to enable that country to return to a state of domestic peace and progress.

43. The Italian Government feels itself in duty bound to act as the interpreter of these feelings here in this highest world forum.

44. Italy, which regards the United Nations as the supreme and impartial body for the safeguarding and guidance of the international community has, from the outset, seen in the evolution of the Lebanese crisis a signal opportunity for an effective concrete confirmation of that United Nations role.

45. What is at stake in Lebanon is not only such fundamental humanitarian objectives as the protection of innocent and unarmed civilian populations and defenceless Palestinian refugees; also at stake is a political principle that is of basic importance, namely, the survival of a small but noble State that is a full-fledged Member of the United Nations and whose unity and territorial integrity are today seriously threatened, a country anxiously wondering about its future.

46. When, in August and again in September 1982, the Italian Government decided to send military contingents to Lebanon in response to the urgent appeal of the Lebanese Government, and—we must reiterate—with the full agreement of all the parties concerned, it made it clear from the outset that the aforementioned initiative was being taken because of its realization of the impossibility of stationing a United Nations force there. That concept has constantly and consistently been repeated by the Italian Government, at all levels and in all circumstances, including here in this forum.

47. The Italian Government has always considered that, better than any other, a United Nations force could have carried out the tasks we deemed to be essential. It is clear, however, that in the absence of a United Nations initiative, Italy—basing itself on a careful evaluation of its responsibilities and on the solidarity that unites us, as a Mediterranean country, with the Near East—could not fail to assume the role it has played as part of the multinational force, a role that has won us the unanimous appreciation of all the parties concerned, to solve political and humanitarian problems we considered to be essential and pressing. Within the framework of the multinational force, the Italian contingent has in particular performed the invaluable task of protecting the Palestinian camps, of making impartial contact with all the parties and of providing assistance—with an equal impartiality—in the form of hospital facilities and basic relief to meet the vital requirements of the neediest sectors of the Beirut population.

48. In a spirit of sincere and full support for the United Nations and its governing principles, Italy therefore decided to send its contingent and attempted to maintain the closest possible contact with United Nations personnel until the assignment to Lebanon of a United Nations force, which we regard as the principal course to be followed, became possible. In this connection, in December 1983 we supported the consultations undertaken by Mr. van der Stoel, then President of the Security Council, and by the Secretary-General for strengthening the United Nations Observer Group stationed at Beirut. In that same spirit, during the course of many earlier contacts and at his recent meeting with the Secretary-General in January this year, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy stressed the need to develop conditions under which the duties of the multinational force in Beirut might be taken over by a United Nations presence. That idea has been reiterated by our Minister for Foreign Affairs during the course of the many bilateral contacts he has just had with the countries most closely concerned in the Lebanese crisis.

49. Italy is today more than ever convinced that meeting that need can no longer be postponed. Our position is not inspired by a desire to evade our commitments of solidarity and assistance—commitments we regard as still valid—towards a country which is in difficulty and which is so dear to us. Rather, our position is dictated by the fact that the Lebanese political situation has deteriorated further, to the extent that the urgent intervention of the United Nations is required, as the highest expression of the will of the international community to safeguard those humanitarian and political interests to which Italy and the other countries of the multinational force have made their respective contributions, which we consider worthwhile. The process of national reconciliation which began at Geneva under fairly promising auspices has not been continued. Consequently, it seems to us that the Lebanese army, essential for the reconstruction of the country, has not so far succeeded in fully and effectively representing the national community as a whole.

50. The time has come for all of us to ask, with a sense of responsibility and a clear historical view, whether the United Nations can remain passive and inert in the face of the very disturbing prospects opened up by the current crisis in Lebanon. The time has come for us to demonstrate to that section of world public opinion which still looks to the United Nations with hope and confidence that the Organization is in fact able to carry out its institutional tasks—that is to say, to stamp the imprint of peace, humanity and justice on international life. If we do not meet that need we shall resign ourselves to a restricted and diminished standing for the United Nations, and in the final analysis for ourselves. And history—and, even before history is written, political events—will hold us accountable.

51. The modalities for sending a United Nations force to Beirut and putting it in position there, its role and the tasks that it should accomplish, must of course be subject to the most careful evaluation, above all in connection with the objective of replacing the multinational force in such a way as to ensure, in the interests of the population and the Lebanese situation as a whole, that a dangerous vacuum is avoided. In our opinion, a United Nations presence in the Lebanese capital must also be seen in relation to the problem of the full restoration of Lebanese sovereignty, beginning with the implementation of Security Council resolution 520 (1982) and other relevant resolutions.

52. At this time of grave crisis for a noble friendly country, the Italian Government hopes that the Council will be able to carry out its fundamental task. We are ready to give it our sincere co-operation.

53. Mr. MEESMAN (Netherlands): May I add my voice to others who have congratulated you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council and

say how happy we are to see someone of your experience and ability presiding over the debate on a difficult and tragic situation in a country which for years now has been the scene of so much violence. May I also add my thanks to the representative of Nicaragua for his very distinguished presidency of the Council last month.

54. Before I address the item on our agenda, allow me to convey through you, Mr. President, to the representative of the Soviet Union my country's condolences on the death of the President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

55. It is with deep and growing concern that my Government has followed the latest events in and around Beirut. During past weeks the city has again been subjected to bitter strife, causing extensive damage to its infrastructure. My Government is particularly shocked by the terrible loss of human life during the latest round of hostilities. We therefore call on all parties concerned to refrain forthwith from the use of force and to agree promptly to a cease-fire to which they should then adhere scrupulously, for one cannot hope for a restoration of some measure of public order in Beirut as long as the fighting continues, fighting which would lead only to further chaos and anarchy. We also call on all involved to facilitate the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross, of the United Nations Co-ordinator of Assistance for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon and of all other United Nations agencies concerned in humanitarian activities in the area.

56. However, it is not solely for humanitarian reasons that we stress the need for a prompt and effective cease-fire in the Beirut area. Such a cease-fire would also be conducive to an early renewal of the process of internal reconciliation in Lebanon, which was begun in Geneva last year. We have welcomed those first steps taken at Geneva, and we urge all parties concerned to resume without further delay the process of reconciliation and negotiation aimed at the establishment of a Government enjoying the widest possible national support and exercising authority throughout the territory of Lebanon. Such a Government would be in a much better position to assert its authority and to accomplish the desired goal of a complete withdrawal of all non-authorized non-Lebanese forces from Lebanese territory. The position of my Government on this issue remains unchanged: we fully support the territorial integrity, unity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon; and it is clear that these require the withdrawal of all unauthorized foreign forces from that country.

57. Sir, we all know that under your most able guidance members of the Council have been actively deliberating on the present tragic situation in Beirut during the past few days. Yesterday, the representative of France [*2514th meeting*] proposed the deployment in the Beirut area of a United Nations force which would take the place of the multinational force at present stationed in the area. Bearing in mind that the grave situation confronting Lebanon endangers peace and security in the region, we firmly believe that all parties concerned are in duty bound to consider seriously ways and means in which the United Nations could help to bring about a more stable situation in the Beirut area. The most pressing problem which the Council should address now is how to avoid a further deterioration by helping to bring about an effective cease-fire in that city.

58. We agree with the Secretary-General that the United Nations is in a position to provide Lebanon with the necessary assistance to monitor such a cease-fire and to preserve peace in the area. At his press conference on 21 December last, the Secretary-General already stated his opinion that United Nations peace-keeping forces are perhaps the best way of preserving peace in Lebanon. At that time the Secretary-General made his observations in direct reference to the situation in Beirut, where the multinational force has encountered great difficulties in carrying out its mission. My Government fully shares the Secretary-General's views, and we think it is high time to look again into the possibilities for the United Nations to make a more meaningful contribution to improving the situation in Beirut.

59. However, the experience of the multinational force also serves as an example that we should not embark too hastily on a United Nations peace-keeping mission in that area. On several occasions, the Secretary-General has made clear under what conditions United Nations peace-keeping forces could carry out their mission effectively. First, United Nations peace-keeping forces should be deployed with the permission of the host country and with the consent of all other parties involved. Secondly, any United Nations peace-keeping mission should be given a clearly defined mandate. Thirdly, such a force would need the approval and full backing of the Security Council. It is with these important general conditions in mind that my Government remains prepared to support any constructive proposal that would lead to a stable and effective cease-fire in Beirut.

60. Again we wish to stress in this connection the overriding importance of an early resumption of the process of internal reconciliation between all Lebanese factions, without which I am afraid the prospects of peace in that war-torn country will remain slim. We do feel, however, that the United Nations can play a useful role in helping to bring about favourable conditions for a successful resumption and hopefully speedy conclusion of this process of internal reconciliation.

61. In this respect, I should like to express my appreciation for the suggestions made just now by the representative of the United Kingdom concerning some limited steps which could be taken almost immediately. As he indicated, these should in no way take the place

of more far-reaching proposals on which the Council could agree at a later stage. However, we feel that in the present circumstances even some small steps now could be useful as interim measures.

62. Lastly, we do hope that, given the serious situation in Beirut, no member of the Council aware of its collective and individual responsibility *vis-à-vis* the continuation of the present intolerable conditions in that city will stand in the way of suggestions aimed at enabling the United Nations to make a meaningful contribution to an improvement of the situation in that area.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.